4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV1

000 At Bandipur we were met by two officials of the Kashmir State, who had been deputed to accompany me—the one with strict injunctions never to lose sight of me for a moment wherever I might go, the other with orders to see me as far as Gilgit. A guard of twenty Kashmir sepoys, Dogras of one of the best regiments, had also been told off as my escort. I had, in addition, four Pathan orderlies belonging to my regiment, the Central India Horse. They were picked men of tried gallantry, true as steel, worthy of the implicit trust I placed in them. The baggage of the party was carried by coolies, the roads not being suitable for animal transport.

• 787 The second of the Kashmir officers was a charming companion, a Hindoo gentleman of the old school, who had passed much of his life at the Kashmir Court. Bright, always cheerful, with a supreme contempt for the savage people among whom we were to spend our time, and also it must be allowed for the beauties of their wild country, he invariably saw the amusing side of life, and was ready to extract some fun out of the difficulties and mishaps of frontier travel. We became the greatest friends, and spent hours in endless talk. The last time I saw him his humour was a trifle gruesome. He came to take leave of me, and told me with much glee how the Brahmin astrologer whom he had consulted about his return to Kashmir had fixed the lucky day for his start, but had not been able to foresee his own departure on a longer journey. The unfortunate man had died of cholera that morning.

487 133 187 From Bandipur the road runs straight out of the valley over the Tragbal pass, the highest point of